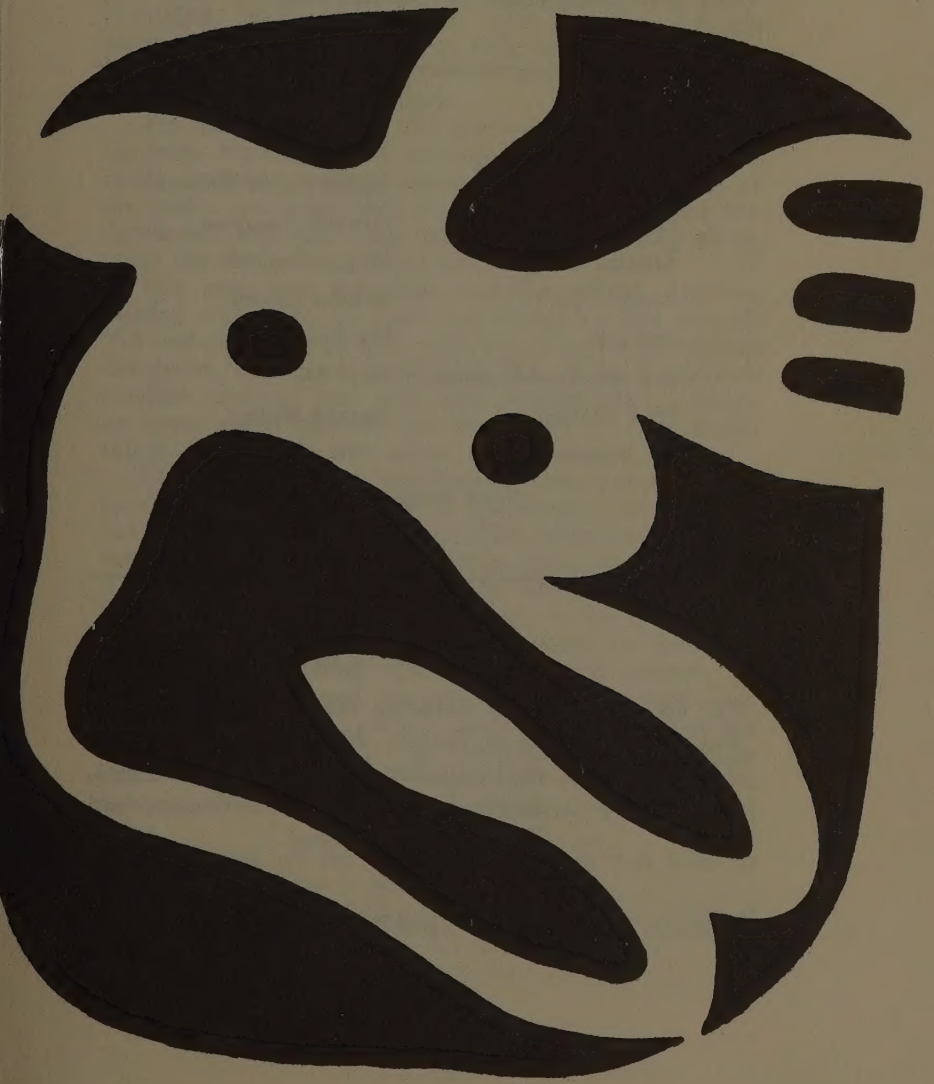
SECESSION 3



SECESSION

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HOPE

He was walking a long time. It seemed to him he was walking always . . walking toward no thing . . walking away. He had the sense of himself very white, very dim yet sharp: white thin throat weary with breathing, white brow weary with pressing through black air, white legs weary with walking away. He had the sense of himself a white thing walking forever from the dark, through dark. . . .

He had no thoughts. His past was the wake behind his feet. He sensed it arching up behind him to a black horizon, arching beyond horizon, the wake of his past . . a thing that was not he and was not the darkness: was the stain of his white passing along upon the dark that passed never. . . .

His past was beingless and thoughtless. He was moving whiteness, his past was where he had moved. Yet certain knowings went with him. They were without dimension. They were impalpable like odors. He moved, a white moving, and with him emanations . . things he knew about himself and the world . . frail pitiful things, impalpable like odors.

One knowing: he was lonely. One knowing: his loneliness was not a birth of his leaving his beloved, but his leaving her was birth of his being lonely. They loved each other. There, between them, growing like a tree, his loneliness. Like a tree clefting a rock, his loneliness: as they clove together, as his arms were about her body, as his mouth was upon her mouth . . his loneliness clefting them asunder. It spread. It blossomed. It spread up until its branches were sky, until its roots were earth . . until its trunk was life between earth and sky. His loneliness blotted out his beloved. His loneliness blotted out himself. He was moving whiteness, moved by loneliness to walk forever away.

He stood at the corner of a street and tried to change himself into a thing that thought.

He tried hard: his legs hurt: he tried to think of

that. There was an empty whiteness in his stomach. He tried to think of that and of the simple way . . there was money . . whereby he could recolor his stomach red. Against his brow black fumes of people moved . . slow, tragically, men and women in black shoes pushing white faces away, moving against each other forever away through black.

Long lost strokes . . white soot in blackness streaking from before his eyes into the pregnant past . . men, women. Little balls of tremulous commotion . . black all about their whiteness, moulding their whiteness . . children. Above his hat, the Elevated Road . . a balance in sonorous black where all that was over it and under was contained. The structure so immediate above him, so infinite beyond him, was a Word. Its recurrent meaningless boom had meaning for him. He stood, white upright wisp, and listened to the word of the murmuring, pounding, failing trains, to the refrain before and after of long black beams parting the dwellings of men, swung between mists.

He took this, satisfied, in place of thought.

The odors of self were free to touch him. He knew now for long he was wandering the City. Long, he had no thought of his beloved, no care. He knew that soon he would stop. His whiteness . . because he needed so, so hoped . . was going to stop.

The street corner where he stood was sharp. Blackness still. But each particle in his eyes stood up: each particle like iron dust was suddenly within the sway of a hid Magnet so that each particle stood up, yet otherwise did not move.

A saloon with garish yellow light and yellow wood. Gray pavement. Desolate forms of men like lamp-soot on the yellow wood, on the yellow light. Grey pavement.

Then in the foreground of his eye a sudden force upon him, a slow thin form. — She is a negress! He saw her big awkward hat, her shoes stuck out from the wooden stiffness of her coat. He saw her wrists stuck out from the stiff wool arms: two hands, luminous sinuous, flexed . . hands moving in air. The air that her hands moved wreathed in volumnear curves like the curves of a slender stem of a flower, to her head.

This he saw also. He saw within the black of her stupid hat a smile toward him. He felt her throat.

He left the yellow light. The grey pavement here was gaseous, clouded beyond. In the dim, he knew the woman beside him.

She walked. Her parting the blackness left a wake that sucked him subtly, slowly. Not horizontal but in true measure with her was their way: the spirallic leap and dip of an uneven hoop. There was a heavy door and a room . . he quiet beside her.

He was aware of quiet. The gas jet spat light with a rasping breath. It and his breathing and her breathing-were encased in quiet. The room was thick and muffled. Foul walls that were thick, the heavy scarlet cover on the bed, the painted door . . made the quiet. These were a fabulous womb of her breathing and his and the gas-light.

She took off her hat. She took off her brown-wooden coat. She turned her eyes upon him . . the white of her eyes. Then her hands uprose, they swam upon her like fish deep in dark waters. She took off her tawdry one-piece dress. She took off her heavy shoes and her coarse stockings. She ripped soiled flannel, sparking from her skin. She lifted the scarlet cover and her black body slid within the bed.

He flung away the cover. Her black body lay on the white sheet. He looked at her body. She looked at her body. It was a black still thing, flowing forever within itself, moveless beyond its boundaries which were white. And within its blackness a glowing cloud of white, making it blue, making it yellow and blue, making it blackness alive.

He said to himself: „Now I had better think."

He took off his clothes. He let the room close in him, touch him everywhere . . at his throat, under his armpits, at his thighs . . the foulpadded room. He lay beside her. Her bloated lips touched like the room on his.

He lay still, stiffly. Her lips worked on him, her arms shuttled at his flanks. He lay still, stiffly. She seemed to hear him, now. She relaxed beside him. She lay flexed. Barely her skin in the narrow bed touched his.

So they lay: gaze threading upward like untroubled smoke; he stiff, she undulous easeful, black like a buried sea: both still.

The wave of her was measurelessly long as if some tiding force . . no wind . . with infinite stroke caused it. He felt himself white. He felt this blackness beside her. He was not stiff. He was not moving away. He knew in her blackness, the white mist running through: saturate white, invisible from the blackness of her body, making it alive.

A great need filled him. He . . separate white, pushing through black . . felt the need and felt the power to be merged in her, to join the white mist making her black alive.

Passion, pure beyond object and beyond self, lifted him so. He took her body: it was body: black dead body she was. So he took her. So he made her alive. He was impress of life upon her substance: song.

Before his eyes was dark Void. Falling through it threads of white, globules of white: in his eyes this woman's body, falling through it himself.

* *
*

He lay smiling with shut eyes on his back.

She left the bed and knelt on the floor beside him.

She kissed his feet. She kissed his knees. She took his fingers, pressed each finger one by one, on her eyes. His fingers were cold.

She beat her brow, dashed her brow and her breast against the iron bed. . . .

WALDO FRANK.

THE ATTEMPT

O tongue
licking
the sore on
her netherlip

O toppled belly

O passionate cotton
stuck with
matted hair

elysian slobber
from her mouth
upon
the folded handkerchief

I can't die

— moaned the old
jaundiced woman
rolling her
saffron eyeballs

I can't die
I can't die

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

PEEP-PEEP-PARRISH

1

Terribly hot in New York. Torrid! Ouf. Fat men wheeze and remove their hats for the seventy-ninth time in the deadly sun. At night alas there is no wind. No air. Thousands expire daily. In the East Side people carry their featherbeds and infants out-doors and sleep along the sidewalk lining the streets for miles up and down with tangled limbs and soiled linen in public.

And of Mr. Parrish? Admirable man. He lay on the floor of his room and knew not what to do. He was stripped naked to the waist giving the pores of his body excellent occasion to perspire and respire freely. Before him labored an electric fan in the full gallop. Mr. Parish is gradually becoming cooler and cooler. Lying on the floor his ***bad heart*** moved well enough for him to smoke. He smoked always in the direction of the ceiling.

Cooler. But what to do in this room. He stood up and moved around it cautiously. Stood by the window for utmost comfort. The air smelled grilled. And yet there was the most beautiful backyard prospect in Brooklyn before him. A grove of yolanthus trees reared itself in the interior space. Lights broke through their imitation palm leaves. Outcries came. Snatches of decolleté families sleeping indiscriminately perilously on fire-escapes.

There was a fire-escape too for Mr. Parrish. He stepped out and climbed the iron ladder gingerly to the roof. His roof! Immense to stand on the roof with only the sleepy stars right above. The most modest kind of a breeze purred about and tickled his back and his ribs. Fatuous Mr. Parrish waved his long flabby arms at the sky and warded off the stars.

Mr. Parrish promenaded his roof. A limited affair at length speedily explored.

„I wonder what this next roof would be like?"

To reach the next required stepping adroitly on a sky-light and swinging up some five feet. Certainly

a different perspective from this little roof. And so one roof led rapidly to another. Their terraces ran upward generally save for certain downward fluctuations. The ascent in some cases offered difficulty but never too precarious.

From a rather high building he found that he could peer over the cornice and glimpse the street a hundred feet below. There was a cinema its blazing lamp and a little knot of people before it reading doubtless its florid bill posters. A formidable desire to see what they were reading dragged Mr. Parrish to the very edge of the building to its tin shaky cornice. He was almost overcome with vertigo as he craned downward. He accordingly reeled back from the edge of the building and thought better of it all.
The street continued to be regarded from a safe distance from his precipice. He stood wrapt up in the whole long bright street this utterly new street for a long time.
An added sense came suddenly into play thanks to the semi-arboreal existence which had begun for Mr. Parrish and he turned his head sharply to the left. In a dark window of an adjoining house there was certainly the face of a woman. She was looking at him very fixedly and her eyes were large with terror. He gazed at her for a minute and a half wondering what objection she could possibly have to him. Then he remembered that he was almost naked. He made an obscene gesture at the face and fled precipitately. He heard a stifled scream: „Burglars! Help!“ Burglars dear Madame do not wear my costume. He doubled his pace and bounded down from one roof to another. At one time Mr. Parrish's foot crashed into a skylight and he caught another chorus of outcries maledictions. He grew nervous and raced around a large water-tank thereby losing his way. How to tell one roof from another! And his own! He must have made the complete circumference of the block before he gained at last his own happy and charming domicile.
His little roof again. He dove into his room from the ladder and collapsed on the floor. He turned on the

electric fan and remained beautifully relaxed. The uproar of his heart dominated the room.

Mr. Parrish was both ashamed and amazed at his escapade. He likened himself to a certain comedian of the moving pictures whom he had seen eluding pursuers along tight-ropes between high buildings and shifting the chase up and down sky-lights.

2

A young man of thirty-five with confirmed habits Mr. Parrish occupied a responsible position with an investment bank downtown. He spent his days in a well ventilated but subterannean office near the Stock Exchange. As for the crags roofs sky-lights fire escapes he had had little enough of them.
Always there had been secret ulcers (shall we say?) in his nature. A quiet unobtrusive man when he was sixteen he suffered from the inclination to write immoral legends on the walls of lavatories. There was the ugly habit of lingering too long away from the desk. He had become more and more ingenuous. At any rate he was discovered red-handed one day and summarily discharged by the bank which employed him. Parental lectures the struggle for existence a realization of the seriousness of life had persuaded him sternly to turn to better ways. The diverting and regrettable practice was relinquished.

Ah Mr. Parrish! His past. This was twenty years ago. And yet the explorations of the night we speak of led his endeavors again into a somewhat questionable direction. They have doubtless been called to your attention by indignant articles in the daily press:

PEEPING TOM HUNTED IN BROOKLYN
Neighborhood Aroused by Night Prowler
Climbs through Windows to Annoy Women

Mrs. Jane Bohme, wife of John Bohme, baker, living at 598 South Sixty-eighth Street, complained to the

police of the eighteenth district last night of having been annoyed in her home by a strange prowler whom she awoke to find staring at her in an obnoxious manner, late Tuesday night. Her screams aroused the neighbors and the man escaped through a window. A spirited search has been instituted and the neighborhood is highly aroused . . . . . .

3

Mr. Parrish mopped his brow at the noon hour. He took the elevator as was his new habit far up to the thirty-ninth floor of his building. There he took possession of a beautiful little white chamber where he made water washed combed and made sundry other preparations for his midday repast. All accompanied by just such an astonishing view of the great metropolis as Mr. Parrish now doted upon.

As he washed he glanced briskly toward a neighboring skyscraper which stood a little higher than his own whose summit ended in a specially monstrous pyramid-like affair from which smoke spiralled up always.

Upon a floor directly parallel with his (but who knows whether it bore the same number) he noticed at times a beautiful stenographer only a hundred feet or so away always typing during the noon hour and who sometimes rewarded his attentions with a gracious glance of her beauteous eyes.

He was touched to the soul was Mr. Parrish. He made quick nervous gestures at her. In fact he waved his hands and the whole upper part of his body at her. He was so encouraged by her silent but only too manifest responses that he megaphoned his mouth and roared „I LOVE YOU.“ She placed her shell-like hand to her ear as a signal that he had passed unheard. But it was impossible to reach her above the noon hour cacaphony of Broad Street. In the meantime she replied to his vivid gestures in a manner that was so unmistakably suggestive that he was convinced of the speedy and favorable acceptance of his proposals.

He descended thirty-nine floors in the whizzing little box himself in an upward transport. He gave the elevator boy a cigar. Kissed him on both ebony cheeks.
On the following day he made animated signals of passion to his inamorata of the Bankers' Insurance Building. Thus with the right hand commencing from the heart outward to the right as far from the shoulder as it would go. Kisses were wafted toward him and he was urged only too plainly to volplane across the brief chasm of seven hundred feet which divided them and perch thereafter at the lady's window.
On the following day he conceived the idea of climbing out on the broad ledge of the window at the thirty-ninth floor and hurling paper messages carefully folded so as to dart accurately through the air to her window. She followed his movements fondly. But all of them missed her precisely. One came so near that she made a low dive for it leaning out so perilously that she with great difficulty prevented herself from toppling below to a horrid destruction and was completely unsuccessful in saving her profuse golden hair from tumbling down all about her even to the floor below.
In his mortification Mr. Parrish howled „I LOVE YOU." Still she did not hear. But some scapegrace on the floor right above him did and sent a shower of telegraph-ribbons down about his ears. They went dancing and pirouetting in the bright sunlight between the two towering buildings for many minutes. Mr. Parrish withdrew chastened and thwarted.
He spent thereafter whole afternoons in a fruitless quest which he had undertaken after measuring carefully the possible location of the lady's floor. He had entered every office which faced his window from the thirty-seventh to the forty-first floor of the Bankers' Insurance Building. He had assured himself with an absent air that she was not in the room while begging pardon for his error. He had not found her. He was not to find her. Yet from the building opposite hers he could see her so plainly.

On one brown misty day he leaned out in the arch of the window at the thirty-ninth floor and looked at

her with wistful chagrin. After considering all the barriers the hazards which parted them he had agreed to yield her regretfully but gallantly.

She saw him and smiled in the curious obscene manner which always took such violent effect upon him. His ***heart*** went unnaturally at this. She leaned out and threw a weighted paper missile at him. It landed directly at his feet. Even as his breath left him he grabbed it up and unfolded it.

„MY NAME IS KATY"

She was smiling at him coyly now as his eyes stared at her with a completely blank expression. He was found later quite cold crumpled up against the cool marble wall of the little white chamber.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON

ARTICLES DE SPORT

Courageux comme un timbre poste
il alllait son chemin
en tapant doucement dans ses mains
pour compter ses pas
son coeur rouge comme un sanglier
frappait frappait
comme un papillon rose et vert
De temps en temps
il plantait un petit drapeau de satin
Quand il eût beaucoup marché
il s'assit pour se reposer
et s'endormit
Mais depuis ce jour il y a beaucoup de nuages dans
[le ciel
beaucoup d'oiseaux dans les arbres
et beaucoup de sel dans la mer
Il y a encore beaucoup d'autres choses

PHILIPPE SOUPAULT

POEM

Meanwhile I observed him from a gable

to run along the street violently for they were thirteen and shout like maybe a siren I must tell Mr Bruce I must tell Mr Robert Bruce I must tell Mr Robert Bruce by five o'clock for they were thirteen at table

thus shouting as the clocks tolled five one clock aping another and he solely human amid the geometry of houses wailed Too late too late for Babylon is falling

falling in flat brick walls folding against the street like painted sets which after the orchestral triumph of the fourth act come sprawling

I have watched crumbs of brick descend like fragments of untidy

manna on the tablecloth at which the butler entered with basketfired japan in an earthenware pot concealed by a cosy and fishcakes blossoming around it by which token also I knew that it was Friday alas was Friday

MALCOLM COWLEY

CITIES II

Though the walls were all of concrete I could by a simple pressure of my foot upon the lever annihilate the tender mechanism which sustained them — though the passersby wore powdered smiles one word from my tongue and they would kill me — though the signs read This Way the crowds ran That Way — as I followed a crowd I perceived two men with Rubber Heels were following me — as I had foretold — as I stepped off a car — as hellhounds after me — but an arched door with the legend *57* opened for me yet nearly snipped off their noses for them
Thus was I welcomed — thus were my feet bathed my body laved in vinegar and ointed with frankincense musk myrrh and other perfumes of Arabia — nude I was carried into the high immense illuminated hall of perfect acoustics and placed alone upon the proscenium — from his towering pulpit the conductor signalled the myriadfold orchestra of bearded men to resume the rehearsal — from the galleries and from scaffolds descended the python instruments menacing — I understood — I was to be judge and defendant vivisected and surgeon at once — the ambrosial symphony assailed me gently passing as a slow fever from my five senses through sympathetic wires to a phonetic recorder
O culmination of the meridian o fountainhead of tonalities sepulchral cadences dulcet incantations — at the second movement three bassoons exploded and three oboists expired the foam frothing at their beards — at the third the casualties it grieves us to relate included one cymbal a flutist four violins and a piccolo — it was at a difficult adagio in Lydian measures that the conductor collapsed over the rail of his stand — among the first to reach him were the cellists who tearing open his white shirtfront revealed the breasts of a woman — at this point the two men entered stealthily by a firedoor of th 6th gallery — I observed them however and with admirable presence of mind stepped full force on the lever

WILL BRAY

ARP THE TRAPDRUMMER

1

The black syllables and the half-split nonpareil type fall asunder out of the ill assembled staves of the sidereal cask. the kindling in the flagpole is extinguished. at the call *cordon s. v. p.* the fourcornered catastrophe came sprawling out of the nostrils of the flowers. at once the men about town heated up their centaurs and went riding on ballbearings about the Venus chamber.
So much for today since it is already tomorrow and I must fare on everlastingly.
Righteously did the maggot covered servant who complained ah so grievously of his dwarf sickness during the tidying up of the catacomb ask where the clear tumult the saintly repose and that fugitive wind had gone to rest. small moon shaped boats brimming with masks rolled along on pronged wheels. from purple mouths hung the empty honeycombs of the angels.
So much for today since it is already tomorrow and I must fare on everlastingly.
From the 10th year of a life to the 11th hour of the morning is a long time yet not long enough for a hungry family to scrape some money together. the first father dances howling about the world. he has fleet squirrels bound to his soles. from his eyes hangs the wreath of welcome. *manu propria* he chases the buck from the environs of his spouse. and to while away the dark hours kicks the teaballs of his masculine fellow travelers.
So much for today since it is already tomorrow and I must fare on everlastingly.
And finally faithful and seemly portrait busts of Arp were struck and distributed among the people.

2

At our will the armada is defeated for the hundredth time. the drowned men with glowing buoys in their

mouths and lampshades on their heads entrain with the nebula of their rapture the the bowelship and the scuttlefish. the soles of the wandering water heroes go plopping about. the bedevilled hag on the after branch is part and parcel of the mechanism of the sea.
So much for today since it is already tomorrow and I must fare on everlastingly.
An artloving puissant and highhanded king donates the first vase. it has six rubber breasts aligned one above the other like buttons. her adam's apple brings the coloratura to well merited fame. the vase is a gigantic boneless snow tent and like all nice people has a handle on both sides.
So much for today since it is already tomorrow and I must fare on everlastingly.
The woman's club called motley sets the wind moving by calisthenics. the cement tongues lick the walking stick the minnesingers the jewish paperweights the buonarotti thorns the prompter's box full of interior cities the soft perjuries the shoes out of which stinking flesh grows and the summer bills.

3

Watches are set at midnight. out of the heavens full of angry tongues fall the prize waterfalls. the little skeletons in black livery hover over the manicured crucifixion and swing the retorts with aqua fortis. in the viper conservatory rails are laid upon which blubbery courtesans and celestial curbstones are carted in.
So much for today since it is already tomorrow and I must fare on everlastingly.
The cuckoo flies off with the clock on its back. the locomotives stroke their military moustaches. the flowers lie steaming on the wharves.
So much for today since it is already tomorrow and I must fare on everlastingly.
The first cuttlefish bone sees the light of the day. the people embrace each other and shout zivio longs for internal peace and leggings with salad. the first prophet steps forth and spans a hundred years of light.

since through a rare piece of foresight he is two dimensional he can by a slight twist withdraw his façade with perfect control thus revealing himself as a perfidious son of dada. he tells the immutable laws on the buttons of his coat. it is perfectly in accordance with official procedure to become any people. his provisions against iron necessity are old smaritan fossils. with the aid of a sextant he cuts a savoury slice of venison from the behind of the friendly lady nearby. also at the appearance of the prophet the people embrace each other weep and put out street lamps.
So much for today since it is already tomorrow and I must fare on everlastingly.
The black liveries sink into the structure of the world and completely conceal the furniture wagons loaded with Nurnberger timekeepers the retinas of the coins the surtaxes in the zither boxes the auctioned snowmen with the frightfully rolling unripe green eyes in their foreheads the Teluric foolscaps the unbridled roes the plants in the Burgundian shirts manufactured in the tropics out of rubber the freshly washed namby pamby sky the eager mob wearing turbans of tuffstone and they hide these said i with veils from the hullaballoo of the world. groaning the door of the dadahouse falls shut.

HANS ARP

(Translated from the German by M. J.)

FIRST PASTORAL

I

Is the Divine present to a degree, so that one could speak of It as either more or less present? Or must this Divine be either present or absent? To the eye of an athlete the sun is gloriously brilliant, while an old man with failing sight may see it as a dull, sullen glow behind a mist. Is it that way with the Divine? Or is the Divine like some figure of a flower or animal in the clouds, which one man sees and another does not see, while there are no possible gradations between the seeing and the non-seeing? The question is not at all impious: for to ask whether the Divine must be either present or absent does not imply a limitation of the Infinite Being, even though the word „must" has been used in the statement of the question. For this „must" refers not to the Divine, but to man, with his limited orifices of penetration. Obviously, God is universally present, and we can speak of His absence only from the standpoint of man's failure to distinguish Him.

Grant, first, that the Divine must be either present or absent, with no intermediate gradations. Which means that a man either lives with God, or does not. If he lives in the understanding of God, of what use to him are the mere functions of Churchly worship? Further, if the Divine must be either present or absent, then it follows inexorably that It can only be absent, for otherwise we should have an Infinite Being understood by a finite being, which is absurd.

Granting the antithetical proposition: The Divine can be either more or less present. In this way the world would become hieraticized after the manner of a pyramid, with the countless hordes of ignorant but faithful followers of the Church forming the broader, heavily weighted base, while as we went upwards with a decreasing proportion of mass the Christians corresponding to these higher positions would have a

clearer understanding; and at the very top would cluster the body of martyrs, crowned by Jesus. The entire construction would be the glorious edifice of that combined πίοτις and γνῶσις which marks all those who have remained untorn by schism; while the dry sands, swirling in the wind, tossed about without meaning and without incorporation into this stable structure . . . these sands, obviously, would be the pagans, the heretics, and the like.

A stirring tope. But the difficulty enters when we examine further just what this „greater or lesser presence" involves in the way of conduct. Would we not, for instance, be drawn dangerously near to some of the neo-Platonist errors? For if the Divine is present to a greater or lesser degree, the worshipper must serve in accordance with the abundance or meagerness of his light. This leads us towards a general synthesis of religions, for if God is present in degree, then He is present in the religion of the most impious pagan, but present so faintly that the entire system of worship is distorted from the true worship of the Church beyond recognition. It is far removed, but exists nevertheless, just as the echoes of the Words of God when He commanded „Let there be Light" are still trembling in the air, becoming fainter and fainter, even more faint as our thoughts are upon them, but bounding on eternally. That peculiar „rustle of silence" which we hear in a perfect calm is the accumulation of just such infinitely faint noises, piled up from the first crack of creation. But the point to be emphasized was that if we grant the greater or lesser presence of the Divine, we must recognize the pagan as worshipping the True God, but in his own ignorant manner.

How, then, should we go about it to bring such people into the Realm of Jesus? By letting them worship in their own manner, once their provinces are under the temporal jurisdiction of the Pope. They would thus be looked upon not as pagans, but as the weakest members of the True Church, and much nearer to the lowest Christian than this lowest Christian

is to a saint. But obviously, such a line of reasoning would bring us close to the subversive teachings of Plotinus and Porphyry. Yet as we have seen, the opposing doctrine leads to just as unholy an attitude towards the Church. What then is the conclusion to be drawn? It is: *Let man always distrust any ratiocination which does not follow hand in hand with the Word of God at every step.* That true understanding is not in γνῶσις but in πίστις. Or rather, that πίστις *is* γνῶσις.

The greater the cogency with which the brain could make the Church seem wrong, the greater was the proof thereby that the soul had become infected. And Brother Angelik's deep learning in theological subtleties made him perfectly aware of what turpitudes logic without love might involve. Still, he had indubitably been enthralled for a time by the heavy bonds of his antitheses. And as he lifted his head now to deliver a short prayer of thankfulness to his Maker — Who had guided him so securely out of this intricacy of the Devil -- he observed that in his anguish he had wandered far beyond the walls of the monastery!

Here was Hell's mockery. Angelik had thought that this bejewelling of heresy marked out the nature of his struggle against Evil, while all this jingling of words had in reality been a mere subterfuge, a lure to reproduce the breaking of his vows, since he had stepped out into the world, beyond the pale of his seclusion, beyond the point stipulated in his solemn oath.

While, further, Brother Angelik had come upon the shepherd John and the shepherdess Jocasta. This John having slipped his hands against Jocasta's flesh, the two of them were now lying earnestly interlocked upon the sod.

*

If prayers possessed the properties of mass and weight, and their density under ordinary temperatures were that of a thick, sluggish fluid, prayers then would have nosed quietly down the corridors of the monastery, oozed through the cracks of the massive, ill-fitting doors,

and perhaps even set the statue of the Virgin to circulating on its side by the altar. Again, a blackness, obviously symbolic, of heavy clouds had gathered over the sky; and having gathered, these clouds lay there like a threat. In the late afternoon the clouds were split to expose a sun which was already part eaten by the shadow of the moon, and which dropped below the horizon in full shadow. Thus, without twilight, midnight followed on the heels of day, while the storm broke, slashing and stumbling in the dark, and rocking the monastery like a ship.

The forces of sin silently multiplied, filling his brain with their progeny after the manner of vipers. When the she is in heat, her gaping, filthy maw is turned to the male. He inserts his three-tongued head into the jaws of his woman, buries it avidly even to the eyes, and projects into her, by the junction of their mouths, his procreative venom. Maddened by her pleasures, the wife then slays her lover by ripping open his throat with her teeth; while as he perishes, she drinks in his spittle. Thus, the father is consumed during the excesses, but the sperm of his spittle still remains to destroy the mother. For later, when the seed has aged, small objects begin wriggling in her warm insides, slashing and beating against the womb. She realizes now what her sex entails and bemoans her wretched husband's offspring, which are destined to murder in turn, and are already tearing at the barriers which enclose them. Until, since there is no channel whereby the young can be born, they split the agonized bowels with their struggles, and the belly is rent to provide an exit. The little snakes lick the body which bore them, a generation of orphans even at birth, since they had hardly seen the day before their miserable mother was dead.*

Nocte surgentes, vigilemus omnes; let us all leap up in the night, and wait! But not for a fleshly love. For some austere sign, rather, which will be found lying across the sky like a comet. Charmed thesis and

* Prudentius, Hamartigenia, lines 585—607.

antithesis of love, of that *higher* love. And in despair he prayed, loudly and disagreeably, complaining, defying, hemming and hawing with his temptations, his moans echoing down the corridors, and buzzing with the storm in the ears of his Brothers, who listened in the darkness and understood that Angelik was struggling for his Faith.

Let me hold in my arms Salvation.
Let me lie between the breasts of the True Church.
Let me speak and in turn be spoken unto.
Let the belly tremble at the touch of my hand on [the door.
Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi!
One unto the other, and that other unto the first.
Moving among the lilies, while the day dawns, and [the shadows lean.
Thy dugs are richer than wine.

He crawled to the statue of the Virgin, and touched the stiff marble folds of her garments. Another voice near him piped up in prayer. Then his fingers fell away, and he was ashamed. „O gloriosa virginum, benedicat te Deus et sanctum ventrem tuum." . . . He sneaked back to his cell.

„Lord, my God, help me, for I am weak. A sign, oh Lord! Show me that I am not alone." Then Brother Angelik became peaceful. He was contracting business with his Lord. „Tonight it is storming. Let it storm tomorrow, and I shall remain with my Brothers. But if there is sun, I shall know that Thou hast forsaken me." Now, as it had been written before the world was assembled out of Chaos, the sun shone unusually bright the following morning, and looking across the hills, Brother Angelik saw that everything was as calm and pure as a mirror.

II.

It was dawn, although the sun had not yet risen . . . full day, without the sun, as though the world were

lit by a calm but thorough Logic. The hills lay about with a dogmatic distinctness. Every pebble possessed its contour, every grass-blade its line of demarcation. Or, when some group was too far off to necessitate a definition of its individual components, it in turn formed a unit of itself; in just this way, for instance, a small patch of timber extended like a pronounced ellipse on the bias against one of the farther hills. Sky, cloud, earth, and the things on the earth . . . all this was differentiated categorically.

Brother Angelik wandered over the hills as the shepherd of John's sheep, John having been persuaded to visit a sister in Padua. And when Angelik had led his sheep to where Jocasta's were already grazing, he called out to her, „Hast thou an apple, shepherdess?"

„Ha, we maidens have many things, shepherd, but not an apple."

„That is an ill omen."

„And why, Shepherd, is it ill that I should not have an apple?"

„Because then thou shalt have to give me a kiss."

„And why, shepherd, must I give thee anything?"

„Because I am going to wager with thee that I can tell thee thy name, and I must win something for my wager."

„But my name is Jocasta; I need lose neither apples nor kisses to be told that."

„And I, Jocasta, am the apple-less, unkissed Theodoce. So now we know each other, and our sheep have already made friends without this banter, and if thou wilt sit here beside me I shall tell thee a story."

„Tell me, then, the story of how Theodoce comes of be tending John's sheep."

„Ho, that is a homely story. I should rather tell to how Zeus gained entrance to Leda as a swan. Or perhaps thou hast already been told that story by some shepherd?"

„Where dost thou come from, Theodoce?"

„From Padua."

„Then I must believe that the shepherdesses of Padua love stories more than virtue."

„In truth! The girls of Padua do not put themselves above the gods. And if Zeus could invent such escapades, the shepherdesses of Padua are not too virtuous to hear of them."

„Well said, Theodoce. And I, as a reward, shall hear thy story. But first, thou must tell me why that story of all stories, has been chosen."

„Because I had hoped that perhaps I, by changing myself into a slave, just as Zeus changed himself into a swan, might gain admission to the bosom of some lovely shepherdess."

„Beware, Theodoce, lest thy incantations fall amiss, and thou turnest thyself into an ass."

„I have no fear, Jocasta. Indeed, I am quite willing to become an ass, if that is the road to charming a woman."

„Ah, thou hast a barbed tongue, and I shall leave thee."

„No, thou wilt pick them up and carry them away from me like precious baubles? Lips, breasts, shoul-

ders, thighs, in short all those lovely parts of woman? Stay, Jocasta, and let me at least ravish thee with mine eyes."

„That is an undressing which all maidens must suffer; thine eyes attempt not my virtue but thine own; so I shall stay, and be looked upon."

„And be spoken unto."

„Such things are so much polish, that virtue may shine the better."

„Virtue! I think my hearing is better this morning, Jocasta, than it has been."

„And why is that, Theodoce?"

„Because yesterday, when I was by here, I heard thee say no such word to John. Tra-la, leave those colors to the sunrise! And we will dismiss that, Jocasta, if thou answerest me these questions. First, dost thou grant that we should strive after happiness?"

„Yes, Theodoce."

„And that, therefore, any moment which could be made happier, and is not, is a waste of that moment?"

„Yes, Theodoce."

„And dost thou further grant that there is more happiness in the marriage of a shepherd and shepherdess than when they remain unjoined?" (Brother Angelik was aware that here he was confusing the two ideas of happiness und pleasure, but that this ignorant girl would not perceive the sophism.).

„Yes, Theodoce. Since thine eyes yesterday were sharper than thy ears, yes."

„Then Jocasta, I have conquered thee, for here is a moment which could be made happier, and is not!"

„Thou art very learned, Theodoce."

„Ah, but thou hast armed thy virtue with words, and even if I lay low the words, the virtue still remains to be stormed. But see, Jocasta, while we have wrangling here, how easily our flocks have intermingled! Finding convenient pasturage in the same place, they have all gone there without question. Or note the slight jerk of the sheep's head, effected while the grass is firmly held between the theeth, and serving to rip the blade and its stock a sunder. If I should draw a sheep, I should draw its legs to establish the laws whereby, if one leg rests at a given point and forms a given angle with a line drawn horizontally to that point, the other three legs, by the reason of a sheep's balance, would be at three other pre-determined points, the whole presenting a rigid relationship. But all this is foreign to the sheep, which, finding the grass of interest, grazes upon it. Ah, would that I could wander thus over Jocasta's knolls and hillocks!"

„Thou art a poet, Theodoce, and poets can sing just as well unto themselves."

Jocasta ran suddenly into the thicket, and would not appear even though Angelik threatened to kill himself. Finding a dagger on the ground, he plunged it into his breast, and fell with his heart against the sod. The blood from the heart soaked into the grass, trickling still warm through the cool pebbles beneath. What was it seeking, that it worked so swiftly among them? For it went with unmistakable haste. As it filtered, the impure red passed into the lonely pebbles; until as clear water it trickled between slabs of bedrock, and mingled with little pools that lay down here in the darkness. Then in elation, this pure water of Angelik leapt steadily towards the sunlight, and

Jocasta, who had come there to drink, drank of him and murmured, „How thirsty I had been!“

■

As an interesting parallel it might be well to add that the day of Brother Angelik's death was the same as that on which Paulus Thessalonicus, then residing at Alexandria, wrote what was considered among his friends to be his most successful epigram. Translated, it runs:

Lamp, when there is a faint shuffling of sandals outside my door,
And the odour of unguents and perfumes
Calls me like a blare of trumpets, so that I
Arise hastily from my table . . . go out, lamp.
For tonight I shall be laying aside my text
To become the grammarian of sweet Amyctis' body.

KENNETH BURKE.

MR. BLUNDERBUSS

The sinister forces in American letters rear themselves again in the triple-columned pages of *Vanity Fair*, that bustling, enterprising, oh too worldy-wise magazine of the modes. How far afield she goes in the effort to keep abreast of the hurried times, to purvey the last shudder to my Aunt Ruth as lays she the June issue on the table of the immaculate living-room of her subsuburban home.

Little as she knows of Villon, she will learn through the oracular medium of Mr. Paul Rosenfeld that Guillaume Apollinaire was the Villon of our age; that he ate „ravioli", frequented cafes, „walked down a street in Auteuil," and yet was the self-same man, „who sat before a writing table moulding words into poems and spinning fanciful and witty tales." But, not only is Apollinaire a poet of „delicate wit," he is the arch-bohemian of the 20th century; his verses are likened to those of Heine, let alone Verlaine. Who is there to gainsay such mis-representations? With Rosenfeld and Vanity Fair bent on „selling" the leading poet of a generation in France, Apollinaire becomes chic, dashing, buccaneering.

Here is, then, American criticism such as we have had it now for many a day in our leading journals. Mr. Rosenfeld — let us out with our supicions — is the most flagrant and barbarous type, since Huneker. Given the temperament of a violinist facing an emotional audience, everything becomes rosy, disheveled, sentimental. His voice is choked with tears and sobs as he rises to the fortissimoes of his fine frenzies. The sense of humour is as lacking as the sense for detail, precision, analysis. This rapturous stuff has passed for criticism, sir! It has gone too far. It is too outrageous. I have always been slightly hysterical on this subject; but I cannot have Apollinaire spoiled for me by such heavy-handed scoundrels, or the vices for which we have perforce forgiven him dragged out and magnified as his virtues. The evil is so grievous, the impetus for such heedless rhapsody has so long been pampered in America that it will need a determined hostility to silence and dis-

credit such malefactors. A cold ear will not merely suffice; there must be plenty of cold water!

M. J.

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Beginning with the fourth number Kenneth Burke becomes a co-editor of SECESSION. Responsibility for the contents of SECESSION can thereafter be ascribed to a majority decision on the part of the editorial staff, which will consist of Kenneth Burke, Matthew Josephson and Gorham B. Munson.

THE EDITORS.

* *
*

Miss Jane Heap, redoubtable polemicist, takes SECESSION to task in the Spring issue of the *Little Review*, despite the fact that the LR. was referred to in the second number as „the real leader, the most provocative of our art reviews." This in spite of the apparent unwillingness of the editore of the Little Review to arm themselves with precise information on the subjects they discuss. Choose for instance any of the art criticisms of Margaret Anderson. Or in this pretty piece of abuse by the Jane Heep (Heap?), the implication that SECESSION is dominated by a Harvard group. In fact, of the three male editors of *Secession*, none was graduated from Harvard University, none was a member of a college fraternity, and one failed to be graduated from Columbia College. How infantile thiswat college did you go to? *On s'en fout.* Such mis-statements are typical of the LR. The Little Review is not a review; it is a state of mind.

* *
*

And if one examines closely the magazines of pronounced „modern" tastes, one finds much to conjure with. *Vanity Fair* in the July number contains an

article by Tristan Tzara called „Some Memoirs of Dadaism" which begins with a curious opening paragraph wherein Dadaism is called „a set of wild practical jokes . . . . . which burlesqued in their violence and absurdity, the absurdity and violence of the life around them . . . . . a carnival of nonsense . . ." These generalities, which furnished an efficient „newspaper lead" for an otherwise precise and informative historical essay were so amazingly at variance with any of the professions of Tzara and the Dadaists that it was not at all surprising to learn from Tazara himself that he had *not written the opening paragraph* of the article, did not know who or why had written it, and found it completely unjust and misleading. Parts of his article were omitted entirely, also in accordance with journalistic exigencies. Heavens what ruffians! To have culture disseminated in America by such butcherish wholesalish hands! And there was an article on music by the modern French composer Georges Auric which I was afraid to read because I suspected that the manuscript may have been tampered with or distorted in the translation. Beside, I am fond of Auric's music, and I defy you to find a musician who can write intelligently about music or anything else for that matter. O the bitter necessities!

M. J.

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„Hope", the story by Waldo Frank published in this issue, is part of an episode from CITY BLOCK which is to be published privately. By the author himself. The subscription edition may prove to be a means of evading the phobia for censoring art that is spreading in America. Pornography *per se* has become antiquated and preposterous since Gautier's *Maupin*. But the S. P. V. is undeniably the greater evil and is becoming a more and more formidable institution. Waldo Frank writes that during three weeks of last July a bookseller was fined $1000 for selling copies of Bocaccio and Rabelais; a publisher

was arrested, and all copies were confiscated of Schnitzler's „Casanova's Homecoming," Lawrence's „Women in Love," and „A Young Girl's Diary" (an authentic document which is of high import psychologically). It is clear that a determined and organized effort must be made against the institution of the censorship. Mere indignation will not suffice. A practical plan must be elaborated to invoke the sympathy of the supposedly freedom-loving American people, through publicity propaganda, through advertisements, through the cinema. The censorship is two-edged: it prohibits people from enjoying artistic literary masterpieces such as the Decameron; and on the other hand makes martyrs of less gifted and less important writers such as Cabell, D. H. Lawrence, Theodore Dreiser, Arthur Schnitzler and James Joyce. The latter is the most uncomfortable discomfiting aspect of the censorship.

The Editors of *Secession* invite readers to communicate to them suggestions or expressions of willingness to cooperate at some time in the near future in a campaign against the censorship.

PASSIONATE SINGER

The day is drab, the day is dark;
I hear a sparrow singing. Hark!

SAINT EDNA MILLAY

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